

2
 FILE APPEARED
 PAGE AL

WASHINGTON POST
 1 September 1986

Moscow Attempted to Frame Danilooff in '84, Emigre Says

By Don Oberdorfer
 Washington Post Staff Writer

5
The Soviet secret police sought to frame U.S. News & World Report correspondent Nicholas Danilooff two years ago in a manner strikingly similar to his arrest Saturday, a Columbia University professor said yesterday.

The KGB tried in April 1984 to persuade Soviet geneticist David Goldfarb, a friend of Danilooff, to hand the journalist incriminating documents prepared by the secret police with the suggestion that Danilooff smuggle them out of the country, according to the geneticist's son, Alexander, an assistant professor of microbiology at Columbia.

"My father rejected the proposal out of hand," said the younger Goldfarb, who emigrated to the United States 11 years ago. He said his father had been informed that he and his family would be permitted to emigrate to Israel in the spring of 1984, and the KGB said he would be allowed to leave if he agreed to the proposal to frame Danilooff.

After he rejected the offer, the Soviets revoked the emigration plan and accused the elder Goldfarb of seeking to smuggle national security material, his son said in a telephone interview. The accusation was later dropped but his father, now 68 and critically ill, has not been permitted to leave.

KGB officials did not say why

they singled out Danilooff, according to Goldfarb, who said the incident took place at "a low point" in U.S.-Soviet relations in the aftermath of the Soviet downing of a South Korean civilian airliner. He said Danilooff had become friendly with his father, occasionally meeting for dinner, and that the KGB showed his father photographs they had taken of Danilooff coming and going from the Goldfarb apartment.

Los Angeles Times correspondent Robert Toth said in a separate interview that some aspects of the Danilooff arrest were strikingly reminiscent of what happened to him in June 1977, but that Danilooff is "having a harder time by far."

Toth, who had reported extensively on human rights conditions as Moscow correspondent for his paper, was called by a Russian whom he had met previously and asked to a meeting on a Saturday just before Toth was due to end his tour of duty.

The Russian handed Toth an envelope that he said was a scholarly paper on parapsychology, the study of psychic phenomena. As he took it, he was immediately grabbed by secret policemen lying in wait. Toth said he was permitted to return home after initial questioning and, after further interrogation the following day, was permitted to leave the country as planned.

Stanislav A. Levchenko, a major in the KGB before defecting in Tokyo in 1979, said yesterday that planting supposedly secret documents and then moving in for an arrest on espionage charges is a tactic used for many years by the Soviet secret police.

"This has been used not only against foreign journalists but against foreign diplomats and others," said Levchenko, who lives in the Washington area and is writing a book about the KGB and other Soviet activities.

Levchenko said he believes at least part of the reason for Danilooff's arrest was "definitely retaliation" for the arrest in New York a week earlier of Gennadi F. Zakharov, a Soviet scientific affairs officer on the United Nations staff, for allegedly buying classified documents from an FBI informant.

Zakharov, as a U.N. official, does not have immunity from prosecution that protects accredited Soviet diplomats. Last week he was denied bail amid indications he will face trial in a U.S. court.

In May 1978, two Soviet employees of the United Nations, Valdik Enger and Rudolf Chernyayev, who also lacked diplomatic immunity, were arrested by the FBI on charges of paying \$16,000 for secret Navy documents.

A few weeks later, in what was regarded as a Soviet response, an American businessman, Francis J. Crawford, was arrested in Moscow on currency violation charges.

The two governments then worked out an unusual trade in which the two Russians and Crawford were released to the custody of their own ambassadors rather than being held in jail. Crawford was then permitted to leave the Soviet Union. Enger and Chernyayev were subsequently sentenced by a U.S. court to 50-year prison terms but, instead of serving time, were swapped for the emigration of five prominent Soviet dissidents in April 1979.

David R. Gergen, editor of U.S. News, yesterday called Danilooff's detention "unprecedented and cruel" and said that "the Soviet Union in two days has undone whatever new public face [Soviet leader Mikhail] Gorbachev has tried to paint. It is clear that behind the open palm of Gorbachev's gestures is the clenched fist of the KGB."

Continued

Deputy Managing Editor Henry Trehitt said the arrest of Danilooff seemed to be "a straight setup" that is connected with the Zakharov case. He said the magazine was unaware of any previous case in which Soviet authorities arrested a U.S. journalist, rather than a diplomat, businessman or other resident in Moscow, in retaliation for the arrest of a Soviet operative abroad.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Soviet U.N. employe Zakharov after arrest in New York.